



The Governor's Commission for
the Everglades

c: Joe Taylor
Anne Hall
Abe Cooper
John Fumero

JEB BUSH
GOVERNOR

February 12, 2001

FRANK BROGAN
LT. GOVERNOR

The Honorable Jeb Bush
Governor, State of Florida
The Capitol, Room 1501
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0001

CURT KISER
CHAIRMAN

Dear Governor Bush:

I am pleased to provide you with the enclosed resolution adopted by the Governor's Commission for the Everglades on February 8, 2001. This resolution further strengthens the commitment by the State of Florida to preserve and restore the Everglades ecosystem.

Resolution 2001-1 supports the renewal of the license agreement between the South Florida Water Management District and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and endorses the Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the management of Water Conservation Area 1 as the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. The resolution specifically recommends that management of the property be consistent with the needs of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan for ecosystem restoration, flood control, water supply, and other allied purposes, and addresses the term of the agreement, research and monitoring, and public access issues.

The Governor's Commission for the Everglades stands ready to assist you in addressing these and other issues involving Everglades and South Florida ecosystem restoration activities.

Sincerely,

S. Curt Kiser
Chairman

Enclosure

FEB 20 2001

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THOMAS BARRY, JR.
BUDDY BOYD, JR.
BRENDA BREWER
DONALD CARSON
MICHAEL COLLINS
BOB CRAWFORD
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RICHARD HARVEY
TERRENCE "ROCK" SALT

BONNIE KRANZER
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

GREG DIEHL
DEPUTY DIRECTOR



The Governor's Commission for the Everglades

RESOLUTION 2001-1

JEB BUSH
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WHEREAS, Governor Jeb Bush through Executive Order 99-144 established the Governor's Commission for the Everglades on June 24, 1999; and

WHEREAS, the Commission serves as an advisory body to the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force and to the Governor as well as a forum for improving decision-making and public participation in Everglades and South Florida ecosystem restoration; and

WHEREAS, Water Conservation Area 1 is part of the Everglades ecosystem and encompasses a significant and unique portion of the ecosystem and plays an important role in the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan as approved by Congress; and

WHEREAS, Water Conservation Area 1 is owned by the State of Florida and the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and has been managed under license agreement by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) since 1950 as the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge; and

WHEREAS, the original license agreement was to expire on January 1, 2001 and has been extended for one year until January 1, 2002 and the USFWS has recently completed a Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the refuge which included public input; and

WHEREAS, the Commission is specifically charged with making practical recommendations for restoring, managing, protecting and preserving the natural resources comprising the Everglades ecosystem; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Commission for the Everglades wholeheartedly recognizes the importance of a restored, preserved and protected Everglades ecosystem as a State and national priority and recognizes the importance of providing for other water-related needs of the region including flood control, the enhancement of water supplies, and other objectives served by the Central and Southern Florida Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved that the Commission recommends to the Governor and the SFWMD that the license agreement with the USFWS for management of the refuge should be renewed.

Toward that end the Commission endorses the USFWS Comprehensive Conservation Plan for the refuge and encourages the SFWMD to proceed with their planned process to re-evaluate the license agreement including further public review and input. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service management of the property should be subject to the requirements and use of the lands by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and SFWMD for the purposes of ecosystem restoration, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, flood control, water supply, and other allied purposes, which are deemed the primary use of the property. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service should be required to manage the property as a wildlife refuge so far as it is not inconsistent with the primary purpose. Furthermore, the Commission recommends that the license agreement address the following issues:

1. Term of the license agreement should be for 20 years with two 15-year renewal agreements with discretion by the SFWMD with one year's notice.
2. SFWMD shall be provided access to the area for the purposes of research and collection of water samples and to advance the implementation and operation of Everglades restoration activities such as the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and the Everglades Construction Project and consistent with the Comprehensive Conservation Plan.
3. Public use and access to the area should be continued and enhanced in the refuge as provided for in the Comprehensive Conservation Plan.
4. The goals, objectives and strategies provided for in the Comprehensive Conservation Plan are implemented by the USFWS and a mechanism is established for the SFWMD and the state to monitor progress on these priorities.
5. The Comprehensive Conservation Plan should be subject to formal public review by the SFWMD every five years.
6. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service management of the property should be subject to the requirements and use of the lands by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers and SFWMD for the purposes of ecosystem restoration, the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan, flood control, water supply and other allied purposes, which are deemed the primary use of the property.

Resolved this 8 day of Feb., 2001
Governor's Commission for the Everglades

By: S. Curtis Riser
Chairman